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Mass Media Language (3)

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Index

MODULE ONE: UNDERSTANDING MASS MEDIA. **4**

What is an Argument?. 4

What is an Argument Essay? 7

Identifying the Parts of an Argument Essay 7

ESSAY OUTLINE 8

Revision and Definition of Mass Media 9

What is a Media Report? 9

REVISION EXERCISES 10

MODULE TWO: SMART PHONES AND RELATIONSHIPS **11**

READING COMPREHENSION 12
Questions 14

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 14

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 15

MODULE THREE: WHEN THE MEDIA IS THE PARENT **16**

READING COMPREHENSION 17
Questions 20

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 20

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 21

MODULE FOUR: CONTROLLING THE USE OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGY **22**

READING COMPREHENSION 23
Questions 26

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 26

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 27

MODULE FIVE: FEAR OF MISSING OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA........ 28

READING COMPREHENSION 29
Questions 31

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 32

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 32

MODULE SIX: IMPACT OF HANDHELD DEVICES 34

READING COMPREHENSION 35
Questions 37

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 37

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 38

MODULE SEVEN: HOW ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA AFFECTS OUR BRAIN 39

READING COMPREHENSION 40
Questions 42

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 42

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 43

MODULE EIGHT: IMPACT OF DISNEY MOVIES 44

READING COMPREHENSION 45
QUESTIONS 47

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 47

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 48

MODULE NINE: TECHNOLOGY AND 'DOWN TIME' 49

READING COMPREHENSION 50
QUESTIONS 52

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 52

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 53

MODULE TEN: MEDIA AND REAL BEAUTY **54**

READING COMPREHENSION 55
Questions 57

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 57

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 58

MODULE ELEVEN: ROMANCE AND SOCIAL MEDIA **59**

READING COMPREHENSION 60
Questions 62

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 62

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 63

MODULE TWELVE: ADOLESCENCE AND SOCIAL MEDIA **64**

READING COMPREHENSION 65
Questions 68

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 68

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 69

MODULE THIRTEEN: DISNEY'S FROZEN AND STEROTYPES **70**

READING COMPREHENSION 71
Questions 73

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING 73

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS 74

MODULE ONE: UNDERSTANDING MASS MEDIA

Hello, my name is___________and I will be your instructor for the course of ***Mass Media Language III***. This is an interactive course which focuses on English in the field of Mass Media. Students will learn to identify relevant vocabulary, engage in reading comprehension, text analysis, short argumentative essay writing, reflect on YouTube videos, practice conversation skills with peers, and write short media reports. Students should have taken ***Mass Media Language II*** as a pre-requisite to this course in order to be able to follow up with the content. In the first course, students were taught and practiced the steps required for essay writing in order to be able to react in writing to the reading and visual material, while in the second course, students learned to write media reports. In this course, we will be combining both while focusing on *argument*.

Module Objectives

This module will be reviewing the essentials of essay and media report writing and how to react to written articles related to mass media. You will also be introduced to the concept of arguments and argumentation, through reading, writing and visuals. The essential and additional elements of argument will also be explained in this first module.
In this module, you will learn to:

1. Define argument
2. Identify the parts of the argument model
3. Identify the parts of an argument essay
4. Understand the relation between media and argument
5. Review media reports

What is an Argument?

As long as there is communication, there is argument. Argument is everywhere. Argument comes in the form of

verbal and non verbal communication. It can be formal or informal. Argument can be a simple conversation between two people or a complex negotiation between nations. Media uses argument through advertising, TV or radio. Argument is not only about convincing your opponent. It can be *persuasive, informative* or *entertaining*.

People tend to argue using two styles. Some are *adversarial*, while others are *consensual.* The adversarial style is the aggressive approach because the arguer wants to win. The consensual style is the more diplomatic approach and it is when the arguer is sharing

information or entertaining. People adopt the different argument styles depending on the argument and arguer.

An argument topic is an *issue* which is a general idea that will later be developed into a specific *claim.*

In order to fully understand argument, one must identify its parts. The argument model is divided into two categories. The ***essential elements*** that are important for argument to take place, and the ***additional elements*** that are not always a mandatory part of communication. The essential elements consist of:

- Claim_ the main idea and the position
- Support_ evidence for the claim
- Warrant_ conclusion

The additional elements are:

- Backing_ additional support to back up the warrant
- Rebuttal_ counter argument/refutation
- Qualifier_ a conclusion to satisfy both sides

Let me demonstrate by using the following simple example.

Issue: *smart phones*

Claim: Smart phones facilitate our lives and have become a necessity.

Support: It has become an important working tool.

Warrant: The smart phone is an important working tool and therefore makes our lives easier.

Now, if your audience is satisfied with the above conclusion, argument stops here. However, if your audience is not satisfied, then one must move on to the additional elements.

Backing: A smart phone is important for work because we can check our emails without having access to a computer.

Rebuttal: Even if smart phones facilitate our lives, it is also a major work distraction tool.

Qualifier: The smart phone is an important working tool if not used as a distraction, and therefore makes our lives easier.

As you can see, the qualifier is a conclusion that satisfies both positions.

What is an Argument Essay?

An essay is a form of writing often written from the writer's point of view. No matter the type of essay, it always consists of an ***introduction, body*** and ***conclusion***. The main idea of the essay is stated in the introduction in the form of a ***claim***.

Identifying the Parts of an Argument Essay

As stated above, the main parts of an essay are the introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction consists of some historical background information related to the topic, and a claim indicating the main idea or ideas to be discussed. A claim can be ***implicit*** or ***explicit***. Implicit means that the ideas are *implied* and not clearly stated. Explicit is when the ideas are clearly stated and it is obvious what will be specifically discussed in each body paragraph. There are always two positions in relation to a topic. There are proponents and opponents to an argument. One could be for a certain position or against. The writer's position is the *argument*, while the opponent's position is the *counter argument*.

The writer cannot totally agree with the opponent, and cannot totally disagree either. If there is total agreement or disagreement, argument cannot take place. There should be some common ground between the two positions, which opens room for the exchange of arguments and counter arguments. A writer can agree and give credit to a certain part of the counter argument, but will also have to show what is weak about it by *refuting* it and saying why the opponent is wrong in that aspect.

The body is not restricted to three main paragraphs, it depends on the arguments and counter arguments to be discussed where each idea will be developed in a separate paragraph. Each argument paragraph will be supported with ***evidence.*** Types of evidence can include: examples, facts, statistics and testimonies. The counter argument can also be supported with evidence, but it also has to be refuted by the writer in order to further reinstate his/her position. In this course, we will be writing essays based on two arguments and one counter argument.

The conclusion includes a summary of the ideas stated in the thesis and a solution if the essay discusses a problem. An opinion can also be added at the end or writers can open up a new window leading to another idea.

Sometimes before an essay is written, a writing plan is required. This plan highlights the main aspects of the essay and focuses on the main points. An ***outline*** is a plan that serves as the skeleton of the essay and identifies its major parts.

Below is an outline for a standard argument essay:

ESSAY OUTLINE

Title

I. Introduction

A. Gained Interest (quotation/fact)

B. Background information

C. Claim

II. Body

A. Argument 1 (in a topic sentence)

1. Support 1
2. Support 2
3. Your opinion

B. Argument 2 (in a topic sentence)

1. Support 1
2. Support 2
3. Your opinion

C. Counter argument (in a topic sentence)

1. Give credit to your opponent
2. Rebuttal/refutation
3. Support (1 or 2) for rebuttal (state in points)

III. Conclusion

A. Restate thesis

B. Opinion/New window/Solution

Once the outline is set, you are ready to begin writing your essay!

Revision and Definition of Mass Media

Definition: Mainstream media or media technology targeted to reach a large audience through mass communication.

As mentioned in the previous course, mass media can be categorized into broadcast, print, digital, and outdoor media.

What is a Media Report?

Let me refresh your memory by reviewing the essentials of a media report.
A media report describes in a short paragraph an event or product. A media report also conveys messages and gives us information we may require through the media.
A media report does not have any specific structure as long as the author responds to the question of the Ws. By answering the Ws questions, the audience has all the important information related to the product or event.
The Ws questions are:

- ***Where*** did the event take place or where is the product being marketed?
- ***When*** did it happen?
- ***What*** is the event or product being described?
- ***Why*** did it happen or why is the product relevant?
- ***Who*** is the targeted audience or who are the members involved?
- ***How*** did it happen or how is the product being communicated?

By answering these questions in a paragraph form, you have supplied your readers with all the information required for successful communication.

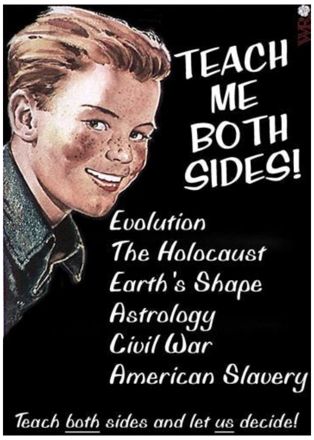
REVISION EXERCISES

1. Identify the following mass media types: magazines, internet, film, smart phones, video games, tablets, music, magazines, billboards, books and facebook.

2. Define the following: mainstream media, claim, argument, counter argument, and rebuttal.

3. Take the issue of *social media* and break it down into the essential and additional parts of the argument model.

4. Look at the following image and in a short paragraph explain two arguments and one counter argument that you can identify in the picture. Then, add a refutation to the counter argument.



5. Write a one paragraph media report using the picture below. Make sure to answer the Ws questions first in order to guide you.



MODULE TWO: SMART PHONES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Mobile phones have now become an essential part of our lives. We manage our work and keep up with social events from our phone. It has become such an important tool that we now cannot live without our phone. Although it is a very practical tool and the phone has made our life easier, it has also become a form of distraction. One must learn to use the smart phone effectively without becoming too dependent on it.

Summary

This module will be discussing the impact of mobile phones on personal relationships. Mobile phones can now become a distraction and stand in the way of a couple's relationship.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand the impact of the mobile phone on romantic relationships through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well-developed argument essay on the impact of mobile phones on relationships
5. React to pictures related to media
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Rules for Romantic Relationships: Put That Phone Down!

Appropriate mobile phone use should be discussed in any romantic relationship.
Published on August 12, 2013 by Jesse Fox, Ph.D. in Better Living Technology

Although technologies are supposed to make our lives easier, they often bring complications as well—especially in our romantic relationships.

One major issue for modern couples is something I call *techno-incompatibility*. When a couple is techno-incompatible, they have different values, perceptions, or behaviors about the appropriate use of communication technologies. For example, a couple may disagree on whether it is appropriate to call or text to discuss a relationship issue, or they may have different ideas about what is appropriate to share about the relationship on a social networking site like Facebook. Tension or conflict may arise because of these differences in use and expectations.

Why are modern technologies problematic?

As relationships develop, we share time in mutually enjoyable pursuits. Media use can be one of those shared hobbies. A stereotypical date consists of dinner and a movie. A common ritual for couples is to find televised programming that both enjoy watching. Other couples connect in virtual worlds, playing video games together. Mobile phones are typically individualized, however, with one phone number expected to reach one user. In comparison to traditional media, the experience of using one's phone is more like reading—a solitary activity—than watching television, which can be a group activity.

Thus, using a mobile device in the presence of our partners is taking what may be shared activity time and diverting it, even in short spurts, to solitary activity. We are interrupting "our time" with "me time," and for some, these interruptions are frequent and persistent. Based on the context of the relationship and the level of understanding in the relationship, these interruptions may be problematic.

Indeed, a common complaint for first dates is that the date used his or her phone throughout the date. Most people interpret it as a sign that their date is not interested or just plain rude because they are spending the shared time mentally, if not physically, elsewhere. Although checking your phone or sending a quick text might seem like a mindless activity and one that barely detracts from your conversation, you may be sending inadvertent nonverbal messages to your romantic partner: my time with you is not valuable/special/interesting enough for me to put "me time" on hold.

These problems aren't just for the newly dating, however. Most couples do not have explicit conversations to establish relational rules about technology use. Partners may observe each other to test the boundaries of what is acceptable use. For example, let's say Rob and Jenna

go out for dinner at a restaurant. Rob notices that as they sit down, Jenna takes out her phone and leaves it on the table. Rob interprets this as a sign that texting, taking calls, or checking the internet in the middle of the meal is an acceptable behavior. He, too, places his phone out on the table. After they order, he gets a text from a friend and starts a text conversation. Rob then goes on Facebook to check out his friend's recently uploaded pictures. In the meantime, Jenna sits alone, increasingly irritated that Rob is spending their night out talking to someone else. Unbeknownst to Rob, Jenna had only set her phone out in case there was an emergency at her workplace. Rob scrolls away, oblivious, until the food arrives. Jenna fumes for the remainder of the meal and gives Rob the silent treatment for the rest of the evening.

A simple conversation could have averted this dinner disaster.

Establishing Relational Rules

The most effective way to combat techno-incompatibility is to discuss the issue with your partner and establish mutually agreed-upon rules for using technologies. Whether you're newly dating or securely entrenched in your relationship, here are some guidelines for helping to manage techno-incompatibility.

Discuss when it is acceptable to be on the phone in your partner's presence. Make a list of your common shared activities: eating a meal at home, eating a meal out at a restaurant, in the car, watching TV on the couch, watching the kids, at an event, in bed in the morning and the evening. Do you find it acceptable to be on the phone at these times? Is it healthy or productive for your relationship if you are using the phone at that time? If you disagree, determine an acceptable compromise (e.g., if it's work-related; if it's a casual dinner but not a nice one; in bed in the morning but not before going to sleep).

Communicate your rules to others. If your mother has an annoying habit of continuing to call you until you pick up, make sure she is aware that you and your partner have agreed on interruption-free time. If your friends are the type who constantly text and expect instant responses, let them know that when you're spending time with your partner, the chat will have to wait. The more others respect your "our time," the fewer interruptions to manage in the first place.

Communicate special circumstances that may necessitate phone access. There are reasons you will not be able to free yourself from your device: you're on call for work, your sister's 8 ½ months pregnant, you left your kids with a sitter for the night. When these issues come up and you need an exception to the rule, let your partner know; don't assume s/he always remembers your obligations. Note that this does not license you to use your phone; it licenses you to use your phone only for that purpose. Rather than checking every ring, beep, or flash, use technology to your advantage: assign a special ringtone to work or your sister or the sitter so that you can ignore the phone otherwise.

If you're unhappy, let your partner know. There is no app for mindreading. If your partner's phone use is bothering you, kindly ask them when they'll be done or if they can put it aside. Don't glare at them, get on your phone and silently retaliate, or make passive aggressive comments expecting them to interpret your wishes.

If your partner asks you to put your phone down, do it. Relational rules only work when both partners abide by them. Don't sigh or huff or complain, and don't say "just a sec" and continue texting for the next five minutes. Take it as a compliment: your partner wants to spend quality time with you and you alone.

These tips should help you cope with device-based techno-incompatibility. Going forward, I will address other forms of techno-incompatibility that plague relationships—but put your phone down in the meantime.

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/better-living-technology/201308/rules-romantic-relationships-put-phone-down

Questions

1. Identify the media category in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Mention two ways of dealing with *techno-incompatibility* as mentioned by the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following pictures and identify the impact of mobile phones on couples' relationships. Explain whether the impact is positive or negative.







2. In a short paragraph, describe the positive and negative impacts of smart phones according to the following video.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSZNQfvcefk

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RO-xZEbY528

MODULE THREE: WHEN THE MEDIA IS THE PARENT

Media is not only an efficient learning tool, but has also become a mentor. It is now taking part in raising our children by affecting their choices, behaviors, and decision making techniques. It is part of their lives all of the time to the point where some believe that it is taking over the role of the parent. In that case, parents should supervise their children's media consumption in order to make sure that they have a more powerful impact on their kid's upbringing.

<u>Summary</u>

This module will be discussing the impact of media upbringing versus that of a parent. The effects of too much media exposure on a child will also be discussed.

<u>Module Objectives</u>

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand the impact of the mobile phone on romantic relationships through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well developed argument essay on the impact of mobile phones on relationships
5. React to pictures related to media gadgets
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Asperger Nation: On Toddlers Becoming Consumers

We are turning toddlers and preschoolers into consumers of media gadgets.
Published on March 10, 2014 by George D. in When the Media Is the Parent

An astonishing new phenomenon is now sweeping the nation: the turning of toddlers and preschoolers into consumers of media gadgets. Though many parents are major players in this social trend, there are good reasons for them to pause and contemplate what they are doing. As a practitioner of child psychiatry, I feel that parents need to be aware of my concerns.

In my clinical practice, I often see 4 to 6 year olds presenting problems of anger, anxiety, or a combination of both, whose parents, interestingly, have worked to quell their symptoms via media gadgets. Mostly in order to amuse and distract their kids, many parents light on the idea of lulling their kids toward sweet dreams in their rooms through offering mind-lulling video games or animated movies to their kids. Likewise, when coping with a child experiencing tantrum problems many parent now place the child in a bedroom with a screen as a companion in order to settle him or her down, distract the child from the feeling of rage.

As I have mulled over these clinical data, I happened upon certain articles in the popular media in which I discovered that the events described by parents in the privacy of my office and transpiring in the privacy of many bedrooms were really outcomes of a broad and premeditated thrust by manufacturers of media devices bent on introducing their wares to ever-younger consumers. In many articles, I learned of how parents have been convinced to offer touch screen devices for usage to infants and toddlers in their cribs. While the actual content of these media presentations often seem innocent enough, the act of introducing media as a mollifier has become very common.

On one level, the articles are amusing, even lighthearted. Yet on another, they are disconcerting, even a bit alarming. Here is the gist of my concern: Parents buy these devices to give themselves a break and to keep the child in good spirits, and they seem to work at least to a point. But when the child misbehaves, parents remove the media device as punishment. Interestingly, since the media device has grown very dear to the child, its removal results in the child pitching a temper tantrum.

Implied in this trifecta of phenomena—the use of media machines to distract the child, their removal as punishment, and the ensuing tantrum as a new problem—is a simple fact stated in various articles and then passed over with little comment: The media gadget seems to delight the children to no end, perhaps more than a well-cherished traditional toy. Why is this tight connection so? Why are screens so alluring, lulling, calming, mesmerizing, in fact powerful? Let us dwell for a moment on this very crucial question.

Child development literature offers at least three distinct answers. First, mother-child attachment researchers have long understood through careful observations of infants, toddlers and their mothers that infants and toddlers are hardwired neurologically to respond positively to certain attributes in others humans. Infants naturally are attracted to eyes, to smiles, to high-pitched voices, to bright colors and movements. Because of this tendency to be attracted to so many traits extant in a mother, mothers are attracted to their infants, and so a very, very tight human connection begins. The child is loved, and the mother is loved too. The child grows and the mother is thrilled to be a mother.

Yet the hardwiring responses of the infant apply not just to moms per se but also to whatever the infant sees and hears. When the child responds positively toward the mother, ideally she responds in kind. But when a media screen offers these same or similar visual and auditory cues, the child grows intrigued with them as well. So the screens to which infants and toddlers become connected in a very real sense are eliciting the hardwiring responses long in play in mother-child interactions, since pre-historical times really. The same magic alive in the interplay of child and mother, however, has now fallen into the hands of the makers of media devices. Its use by media machines manufacturers creates a kind of child-machine pseudo-attachment experience. If misused, it might have serious consequences for both the child and the society.

Next, as has been recently discovered, humans playing action-packed video games experience an elevation of levels of a naturally occurring chemical in our central nervous systems, dopamine. A squirt of dopamine delivered to the players of games seems to instill a sense of wellbeing in the player, a sense of focus. If this hypothesis is true, then it can be inferred that the toddler glued to the screen who appears hypnotized may truly be so. A kind of euphoria has evolved in the viewer or player. The interruption of the bond can lead to a display of dysphoria, hence a temper tantrum.

Third, a social scientist at MIT named Sherri Turkle has described the so-called Goldilocks effect: not too hot, not too cold, but just right, in trying to understand the human fascination with screens and our intense tendency to get glued to screens unendingly. Her idea is that all human relations, including ones between parents and infants or toddlers, can lead to deep satisfaction but also emotional upset. The infant crying inconsolably elicits in most parents the desire to soothe. Yet such attempts to help the child sometimes go awry. For instance, if a child awakens in the night, fearful, terrified of the dark, and cries out in horror, the mother usually awakes and rushes to help. Sleep-deprived or not, she struggles to be emotionally present enough to serve as a good enough soother. But fatigue, distraction, irritability can elicit in the parent a too hot response, angry; or a too cold response, half-heartedness and emotional unavailability. In either instance, the child can suffer, and the child-mother relation can be weakened.

Not so with media gadgets that are usually amiable, in fact, if fed with electricity, indefatigable. Though in truth unemotional, the media can offer facsimiles of upbeat and cheerful emotions in their responses to the child 24/7. Hence many parents learn instinctively to rely on media contrivances to lull their two year-olds toward sleep or to soothe their

agitation or bury their irritability. In a sense, parents are sidelining themselves from a central part of their parental role.

So where do these three ideas leave us? The upshot is that parent-child, even the mothers-infant experience, can occur with more emotional distance. On an emotional, instinctive level parent and child learn to know the other less well. Connectivity between parents and child can attenuate.

Over time in the culture where will this trend lead? I have three distinct concerns. First, children growing up from infancy onward into the preschool years with less parental connection will potentially suffer from significant mother child attachment disorders. I am speaking of large clusters of children developing what researchers call avoidant attachment, the crux of which involves an emotionally dismissive mother rearing a child who grows emotionally aloof, not in need of connectivity with other people.

Second, in terms of the issue of dopamine levels related to game playing, children run the risk of instinctively seeking out the euphoria induced by high dopamine levels. The media machine becomes a necessity, a kind of fix. Internet addiction begins at an early age.

Finally, in the area of the Goldilocks effect, children with more distance from their primary parental connection might develop problems in coping with internal distress created by human conflict. At all cost they might work to avoid such painful if crucial experiences. Due to literally less face time with other humans, they might develop difficulties at reading social cues, feeling empathy for others, and forming reciprocal relations. In short, we are likely to see large numbers of human beings manifesting the cardinal symptoms of what is fashionably referred to as Asperger's disorder.

Dr. George Drinka is a child and adolescent psychiatrist and the author of The Birth of Neurosis: Myth, Malady and the Victorians *(Simon & Schuster). His new book,* When the Media Is the Parent*, is a culmination of his work with children, his scholarly study of works on the media and American cultural history, and his dedication to writing stories that reveal the humanity in us all.*

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/when-the-media-is-the-parent/201403/asperger-nation-toddlers-becoming-consumers

Questions

1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Mention one difference between mother and media upbringing on a child as discussed by the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following pictures and identify the impact of the media gadgets on children. Explain whether the impact is positive or negative.







2. In a short paragraph, describe possible ways to reduce your child's media consumption and what could be some other activity alternatives according to the following video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzP1H5pUIbw

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjv_PS9VDWg

MODULE FOUR: CONTROLLING THE USE OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

Technology can be very over powering. I can become an addiction and it can especially control our lives. As mentioned in the previous module, technology can have a great impact on children, but most importantly, it can impact adults. So how can adults control their children's media consumption when they cannot control their own?

Summary

This module will be discussing How to control media consumption. It will provide guidelines on how to stay focused in a rich media technology world.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Tips on how to control the use of media technology through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well-developed argument essay on how to control technology use
5. React to pictures related to media technology
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Keep Your Brain Healthy in a Tech-Rich Environment

It will help you sleep like a baby.
Published on February 27, 2014 by Larry Rosen, Ph.D. in Rewired: The Psychology of Technology

Yesterday I delivered a daylong workshop to representatives of international schools at a conference in Mumbai, India hosted by the American School of Bombay. The conference is called ASB Unplugged and this is my third appearance in the last three years with the audience being IT directors, administrators, and teachers all working in schools that heavily incorporate technology. I had prepared for weeks, had my slides nicely divided into three modules and was going along fine until someone asked me the following question:
"Based on your research and research that you have read and trust, what are your main suggestions for us to help our students stay focused and not get distracted?"

I thought for a moment and proceeded to ditch the last two-thirds of my talk and carefully extracted a few slides here and a few slides there and had an epiphany. Yes, I could answer her question and yes I did feel that I had the data to back up most of my answers. Where I didn't have the data I felt that I had a reasonable explanation based on what I know about brain functioning. And, more importantly, I felt that I could take her question one step further and talk more generally about what we could do to help us stay healthy including both our daily and nighttime activities. I think that the latter—our sleep and rest—is more critical than ever because the data show that most of us are not getting enough rest and that's not good for our brain or our lives. Just visit the National Sleep Foundation's website and read some of their reports and you, too, will be convinced how important it is that we relearn how to sleep for our health.

STEP 1: Reset Your Overloaded Brain Often During the Day

There is now ample evidence that technology and our busy lives overly stimulate our brains. There is also emerging evidence that certain activities act to calm our brains. For example, one study had participants wear an EEG cap and first walk in a busy, urban area and, not surprisingly, their brains showed heightened activity. However, when they then walked into a park the activity decreased dramatically in a very short time. Leaving the park and walking in the city again jacked up the activity. Based on my reading of similar studies there are many activities you can do to calm your brain. Mindful meditation works as does exercise. Other potential calming activities include taking a hot shower or bath, speaking a foreign language, listening to music, looking at art, laughing, talking to a friend (but only if it is a positive conversation; negative conversations appear to overly activate your brain) and even practicing a musical instrument. And it appears that it only takes about five to 10 minutes for the brain activity to reduce significantly. This is not a new concept. Cigarette breaks and

coffee breaks were designed to get us away from our desks to revitalize us and make us more productive, albeit through the ingestion of chemicals. As far back as the 1960s, Nathaniel Kleitman, a pioneer in sleep research, suggested that just as our sleeping brains have 90-minute cycles, so do our awake brains. He called this our Basic Rest and Activity Cycle and suggested that every 80-120 minutes our brains need a rest. Try a 10-minute break every hour and a half to two hours and pick an activity that neuroscientists know calm your brain activity.

STEP 2: Train Yourself to Focus and Attend With Technology Breaks

There has been a lot of talk about how we are overloaded with technology and the truth is that we are. Most of us carry our smartphone in our pockets or purse and rarely is it out of sight (and certainly not out of mind). As an observer of people, I have noticed more younger people choosing to carry their smartphone in their hand almost as an extension of their body. When I ask them why, they claim that they want to feel the vibration so that they don't miss anything. Some call it FOMO or fear of missing out, and about six months ago I wrote a post on this very topic, which is prominent among heavy smartphone users (Always On, All the Time: Are We Suffering From FoMO?). I have heard some claim that we need to go on a technology fast to appreciate our life without technology and recently spent time talking about this with someone who runs a weekend digital detox program. But I think that begs the issue. No matter how much fun you have playing games and interacting face-to-face with people over a weekend you are still going to return to your world of e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, text messages, Instagram, World of Warcraft, and oh so many electronic communication modalities. They are alluring and they make us feel, for the most part, wanted and cared for by our "friends" be they friends in RL (real life) or SL (screen life).

By the way, I am not disclaiming the value of both types of friends. In a recent study we found that those young adults who had more Facebook friends AND who spent more time talking to people on the telephone evidenced fewer symptoms of dysthymia (mild depression) and major depression. This is not to say that having many Facebook friends is all good since it also predicted more symptoms of mania, narcissism, OCD, and many other anxiety-based disorders.

So the solution is not to stop using the tools that are so valuable at providing connection and knowledge. The trick is to learn when to use them and when to put them aside. Way back in 2011 I wrote a blog post entitled, The Amazing Power of "Tech Breaks". At this point it was simply an idea of how one might go about helping students in tech-rich classrooms learn to focus. Over the past nearly three years many teachers have reported back to me that they are using tech breaks with major success. One teacher in my workshop literally spent five minutes telling the others how magnificent it was working with her middle school and high school students. The technique is simple and you can read about it in my 2011 blog post but the upshot is that you are training your brain to not produce neurotransmitters that, in turn, produce physical anxiety symptoms, which then signal your brain to check in with technology to reduce those symptoms and rid the brain of those neurotransmitters.

STEP 3: Put Away Your Smartphone an Hour Before Bedtime

Taking our cue from the National Sleep Foundation we did a study that examined the activities that might lead to a poor night's sleep among teens and college students. Basically, three things predicted a poor night's sleep: excessive use of a smartphone in the last hour before bedtime, constant multitasking during that same time period and sleeping with a smartphone next to the bed (ostensibly as an alarm clock). Although we never published the study due to some methodological issues, the conclusions, I believe, are valid. We found, for example, that 75 percent of the subjects slept with their phone next to the bed either with the ringer on or on vibrate and most checked their phone if they awakened during the night. Sure, they told us they were just looking at it to check the time but nearly all smartphones display recent alerts and notifications and seeing them impacts your brain chemistry and essentially disrupts your sleep cycle by activating a variety of neurotransmitters depending on the messages and alerts and their emotional impact. If you, or your teenager claim that you keep your phone next to the bed because it's your alarm clock I will be happy to send you a link to a very inexpensive alarm clock that does nothing but display the time.

STEP 4: Replace Your Nighttime Smartphone Use With More Calming Activities

This suggestion is based less on actual data and more on my rudimentary understanding of brain function and neurotransmitters. Without your smartphone what will you do? In our sleep study we found that watching television in the last hour before bed predicted a better night's sleep and my guess is that the more familiar the program—meaning the more predictable the plot—the less it will activate your brain in ways that might make sleep difficult. Along the same lines, I suggest that listening to music might also help but only music that is very familiar, in fact, so familiar that you feel you can hum the tune in your sleep. Again, my supposition is that this predictable music will activate fewer disruptive neurotransmitters and essentially use well-reinforced neural pathways that we know require less oxygen and glucose. Don't listen to new music because that will likely lead to more brain activation as you try to learn the tune and the words, which will interfere with the production of neurotransmitters that aid in falling asleep. My final suggestion is to read a paper book. However, I recommend that you don't simply select any book but read one written by an author that you like and have read extensively so that the writing and the plot is predictable, again, hopefully using less brain power and allowing for sleep to ensue.

STEP 5: Practice Metacognition

Metacognition is understanding how your mind or brain works. Extended into the realm of technology, a metacognitive person is one who has a clear idea of what activities are stimulating and what activities are calming. Checking your email before you go to bed is probably not smart and a person who is metacognitive knows that. It's important to learn what activities you personally find calming and relaxing and which ones simply over activate your brain. Personally, I find crossword puzzles calming, which sounds counterintuitive since they are certainly using a lot of brainpower but for me they are calming, and don't disrupt my ability to sleep. I find some television shows relaxing and others invigorating. Some people know that taking a shower before bed relaxes them while others find a shower wakes them up and stimulates them. You alone know the activities that are good and calming for your brain

and even if they make no sense practice being metacognitive about what you do during your rest and sleep periods.

As we learn more about how our brain functions I suspect we will also learn more about what is good for our brain and what is not. In order to keep up with what is out there I follow a small group of neuroscientists on Twitter who I feel do good solid research and who report their results in ways that are easy to interpret and apply to real life issues such as sleep. I would be happy to suggest some if you so desire.

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/rewired-the-psychology-technology/201402/keep-your-brain-healthy-in-tech-rich-environment

Questions

1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Mention two ways of how to control media consumption and keeping your brain healthy as discussed by the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following pictures and identify different ways to keeping your brain healthy in a technology rich world. Discuss the impact it can have on the individual.







2. In a short paragraph, describe ways to keeping a healthy brain according to the following video.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zt8BORx5BgA

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pyfgd3SD90I

MODULE FIVE: FEAR OF MISSING OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is part of our everyday life. We rely on social media to communicate, to keep up with friends, and to be entertained. Some claim it has become an addiction, but a recent study claims that it had become more than just an addiction. Many people fear of missing out on social media and therefore suffer from a new disorder, FoMO.

Summary

This module will be discussing the new disorder caused by social media. Dr. Rosen identifies this disorder as FoMO (Fear of Missing Out).

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand FoMO disorder created by social through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well-developed argument essay on the impact of social media and how to deal with it
5. React to pictures related to social media dependency
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Always On, All the Time: Are We Suffering From FoMO?

Social media, multitasking, and e-communication can lead to Fear of Missing Out.
Published on May 2, 2013 by Larry Rosen, Ph.D. in Rewired: The Psychology of Technology

FoMO: Fear of Missing Out

I used to snicker at those people who couldn't sit through a 90-minute movie without checking their text messages or social media and wondered why anyone would want to disrupt their sleep by checking e-mail or other communications whenever they woke up during the night (if you don't wake up several times then you are probably way younger than I am!).

Now I am not so sure that I am exempt from the draw of staying connected. I find myself turning my phone on surreptitiously in my pocket just as wheels touch the tarmac and since my phone is my alarm clock (or so I tell myself) I find my eyes straying to the blackened screen when I stumble to the bathroom somewhere around 5 AM. The draw is intense and it is reflected in a series of studies that have been highlighted in the media lately.

According to Dr. Andrew Przybylski of the University of Essex, many of us are suffering from FoMO or "Fear of Missing Out." According to his recently published study in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, "FoMO is characterized by the desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing." That sure sounds like many people I know. Although I do not post on Facebook all that often I have noticed a trend: There are a handful of people who will respond either with a comment or a "like" within a few short minutes of anything I post. And the most interesting part is that these are not people that I know well at all. In fact, they are people that I rarely see and do not consider being a "friend."

Dr. Przybylski and his colleagues found that people under 30 were more likely to fear missing out—not surprising to me given the work I have done comparing the most recent Net Generation, iGeneration and Generation "C" on their values, beliefs and technology usage—and that social media was most often the culprit. They also discovered, in a series of three studies, that if peoples' psychological needs were deprived—particularly those needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness—they were more likely to have higher FoMO scores. They also reported that, "… the elevation of negative social and emotional states such as boredom and loneliness linked to social media usage also relate to FoMO."

The main result, at least for someone who studies the impact of social media like myself, is that, "… fear of missing out played a key and robust role in explaining social media engagement over and above the other factors we considered." In other words, although the study was not "causal" in nature, it appears that social media either cause or exacerbate

FoMO. Another corollary to this finding from their final study is that those university students who were high in FoMO tended to be those who were using social media more in general, more quickly upon waking, just before going to sleep, during meals, during lectures, and while driving a car.

It is no surprise that FoMO appears to drive behaviors that are launched to connect and it is even less of a surprise that, at least among young people, these connections are mostly virtual. In study after study we find that members of the three youngest generations prefer to connect with their friends and family virtually, through text messages, social media and even e-mail as opposed to face to face. As one young person told me when I was writing *iDisorder*,

"If I talk to someone face to face (or even on the phone) I have to pay total attention and 'unitask' and that is not how I run my life. I am constantly doing many things at the same time and after I send a text or post on one of my social media sites, I have time to do other things before getting responses. It's just more efficient."

In research done in the George Marsh Applied Cognition Lab that I co-founded with my two colleagues, Dr. Mark Carrier and Dr. Nancy Cheever, we are finding the impact of social media and electronic connection everywhere we look. When we watched students studying in their homes the biggest distracters were Facebook and texting. When we assessed symptoms of psychological disorders, Facebook was the main predictor, both in positive and negative ways. Having more Facebook friends (along with talking more on the telephone) predicted fewer symptoms of dysthymia (mild depression) and major depression while using Facebook more often, having more Facebook friends and doing more "impression management" by posting comments, photos and status updates, predicted more symptoms of many other disorders including narcissistic personality disorder, mania, antisocial personality disorder, histrionic personality disorder and compulsive disorder even after factoring out anxiety about not being able to check in with social media and other technologies (our version of measuring FoMO). In fact, social media use accounted for nine of the 15 significant predictors of psychological disorders after factoring out all other relevant demographic, attitudinal and anxiety-based variables. Although not yet published, we have found that social media use also impacts sleep (negatively) and online empathy (positively). I guess that an activity that we all do all day long, and accounts for nearly one in four minutes on the Internet, must have an impact on us.

I find the concept of FoMO to be quite compelling when I speak to audiences around the world. Most people, particularly parents and students, readily indicate by their nonverbal communication (lacking on social media) that they, too, feel this pull. If you want to see how you rate on FoMO you can do so at http://www.ratemyfomo.com.

Is there a "cure" for FoMO? If you read my blog here or on the Huffington Post, you know that my view is that it all rests on understand what technology does to our brains.

We are not automatons that can stay connected to the Internet, gleefully task switching for hours on end without breaks, and expect ourselves to not feel anxiety about missing out on

something that “might” happen when we are disconnected. My philosophy rests on work done by Nathaniel Kleitman, one of the pioneers of sleep research, who found that similar to our 90-minute sleep cycles, we have a BRAC—Basic Rest Activity Cycle—during awake periods and that those cycles are also about 90 minutes in length. This should not surprise you. After an hour or two of work you need a break. Luckily for the workaholics or FoMOers among us neuroscience has shown us that short breaks, no more than 10 minutes in length, can reset our brains and restore them to a calm state, ready to begin task switching mania once again. Taking a walk outside, exercising, meditating, listening to music (unitasking), or talking to a friend all calm the brain. You know what calms your brain. Practice doing something to calm your brain every 90 minutes and perhaps you will avoid that FoMO feeling.

[I think I will go make a cup of coffee and work on the Thursday NYT crossword. That calms my brain!]

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/rewired-the-psychology-technology/201305/always-all-the-time-are-we-suffering-fomo

Questions

1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Mention two ways of how to control media consumption and keeping your brain healthy as discussed by the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

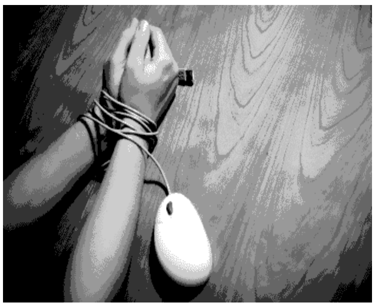
ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following and explain the impact of social media dependency as shown in each picture.











2. In a short paragraph, describe the impact of “FOMO” according to the following video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4o3W3Wx8X7Y

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDf3h58RzEY

MODULE SIX: IMPACT OF HANDHELD DEVICES

Technology is now part of our lives. With the rapid evolution of digital technology, it is becoming difficult for some to keep up, and for parents to control their children's use of technology. Studies suggested that it is harmful to children to spend long hours in front of screens or on handheld devices. However, recent studies suggest that this is going to be difficult since adults are so involved in technology and maybe handheld devices for children may not be such a bad thing.

Summary

This module will be discussing whether or not parents should ban children from using hand held devices. However, in a world where digital technology is rapidly increasing, will that be possible?

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand the impact of digital technology on children and shouldadults handle it, through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well developed argument essay on whether or not handheld devices is a good or bad thing for children
5. React to pictures related to digital technology
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Why Banning Handheld Devices for Kids Isn't the Way to Go
A response to recently published guidelines

Published on March 12, 2014 by Lynn Schofield Clark, Ph.D in Parenting in a Digital Age

In a recent article titled 10 Reasons Why Handheld Devices Should Be Banned for Children Under the Age of 12, a pediatric occupational therapist calls upon "all parents, teachers, and governments to ban the use of handheld devices for children under the age of 12." Under these guidelines, children older than six are to be allowed two hours of screen time per day. And children should only be allowed to utilize a handheld device after age 13.

The experts cited in this article put forth a great deal of evidence to support their arguments about the harm caused by digital and mobile media, and some of their arguments are debatable.

For me, however, the real problem with the strict limits approach is this: Are there any parents out there who have 22 hours each day in which to regulate and oversee their children's media use?!

The experts in this article don't actually suggest that parents should do this policing. They suggest instead that parents should get rid of their own mobile phones, tablets, laptops, game consoles, and other handheld devices so that their children will not have access to these devices. But I think we all know that's not going to happen. And if we don't get rid of our own devices, a different problem emerges: We're now encouraging our children to "do as I say, not as I do."

And here's another problem with this suggested approach of constant control of the media environment: Even if we ban these technologies in our own homes, our children are likely to have opportunities to play games, check out YouTube, or text friends when they're at the home of a friend or relative or even when they're in their school's computer lab. I suppose we as parents could demand that others comply with our own strict policies, but that's especially problematic in households of divorce. Where family members have differing approaches to technology, our children need opportunities to see that we are able to work out those differences. Policing across a variety of settings has got to be exhausting anyway.

And so I think it comes down to this: Do we really want to oversee our children's every activity?

I know that when it comes to digital and mobile media, I don't want my children to look to me to regulate them constantly. I want to raise children who are able to regulate themselves.

And in fact, members of the Institute of Medicine, the National Research Council and the Center on Media and Child Health tend to agree with me. At a recent conference at the National Academy of Sciences, experts suggested that instead of allotting a fixed number of hours for limited screen time, a better approach might be to ask how we, as caring adults, can help our young people learn to manage their time in a media-saturated society.

One way that we can do this is to model the behaviors we want. If we want our children to learn that it's appropriate to turn off our devices at key moments (such as when we're at the dinner table together), then everybody shuts off the devices and you as a parent engage everyone in conversation about topics that are of interest to all. If we want to model the importance of playing outside, then we need to make the time to play outside with them. And if we want our children to become young people who can and do give their full attention to others, we can model how to listen respectfully, perhaps even asking them to show us their favorite online spaces as a way of demonstrating our interest in them.

Most of the parents I've spoken with have suggested that mobile and digital media are playing some positive roles in their family's lives together. Parents appreciate the ability to remain in contact with their children by mobile phone when they are at work or school, and many researchers in education are exploring the benefits of technological use for the development of creative thinking and engagement. New handheld technologies can be especially wonderful for young people with special needs, as Jo Ashline points out in her blog reponse to the same article.

Screen time also has an important and overlooked benefit in time-stressed and, especially, single-parent homes. When a child is safely occupied in an activity of his or her choice in the home, a parent has the needed time to fix dinner, do laundry, or attend to the needs of other family members. Limiting screen time might result in more hours of paid childcare, more money spent on takeout food, or more chaos in the household. Those don't seem like very attractive options for most families, and they're not developmentally desirable, either.

Our children are growing up in a mediated environment. This environment may have many new dangers, and it's important to educate ourselves and our children on why limits are important. But rather than asking only about the appropriate limits, perhaps we should be asking how we might use technology in ways that will enhance our lives together.

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/parenting-in-digital-age/201403/why-banning-handheld-devices-kids-isnt-the-way-go

Questions

1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Mention two ways of getting your children involved in other activities and distracting them from handheld devices.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

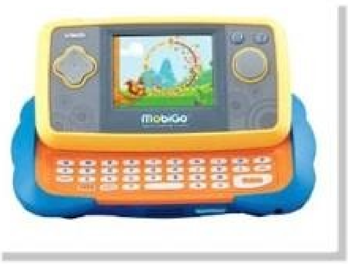
ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following and explain the impact of the following handheld devices as shown in each picture. State whether the impact is positive or negative and identify the media category in each picture.








2. In a short paragraph, describe the effect of handheld devices on toddlers' development according to the following video.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrQhmcPrhFw

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media repot answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VtFHyQ7BsA

MODULE SEVEN: HOW ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA AFFECTS OUR BRAIN

Many of us use media in order to be entertained. Many believe that media for entertainment purposes does not affect us. In fact, it definitely affects our brain. Feeling and emotions are stirred because we want to become a part of what is happening on entertainment media. We live through our favorite characters and we want feel and experience the same thing they are going through. However, this has a definite impact on our brain.

Summary

We attach ourselves to other's people success that we witness in the media. This module will discuss how entertainment media affects our brain.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

- Understand the impact of entertainment media on the brain through text analysis
- Learn new vocabulary words
- Identify the parts of argument in the text
- Write a well developed argument essay on the impact entertainment media on the individual
- React to pictures related to entertainment media
- Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

The Oscars Affect Your Brain

The real reason we watch the Academy Awards.
Published on March 2, 2014 by Billi Gordon, Ph.D. in Obesely Speaking

Hollywood held its 86th annual glitz extraordinaire—the Oscars. Why do people watch the Oscars? Unlike the Olympics, the Oscars are not a fair measure of excellence. The Oscars are political, subjective and exclusionary. Yet, it is a huge deal to people, all over the world. As far as true entertainment value goes, you can find better bang for your buck on YouTube. So, what is it with this award show?

As usual, it is a brain a thing. Self-perception, in particular, self-esteem, is partially determined by evaluating other's opinions of us. This is because we are a social species. The crowd's opinion of us determines our social rank, which affects everything about us. This includes our health, which Sapolsky's brilliant work with baboons proved and The Whitehall Studies in London further substantiated.

This innate need for social approval is why the Oscars, Spectator Sports and Beauty Pageants have their appeal. Mimicking social approval in our brain is known as BIRGing: Basking In Reflected Glory. BIRGing is attaching yourself to someone else's success and making it your own. With the Oscars, we all dream about winning an academy award. When our favorite actor wins the academy award, or walks down the runway looking fabulous, it makes us feel good. That is because in our brain, based on our association with the actor i.e. "they're my favorite," it entitles us to share in their success. This process occurs in the old mammal brain, which is subcortical. This is not the thinking part of the brain. This is where physical responses and emotional reactions occur.

That is why housewives all over the world were able to trick their brains into thinking Oprah's success was partly their own—they were her cheering section—so she belonged to them. Thus, what belongs to her belongs to them. This is especially true of sporting teams, and why spectator sports are a huge business. They are our team, when they win… we win. The reality is we do not play, so we cannot win or lose. We watch and the team either wins or loses.

Likewise, that is why people all over the world will pick their favorite movie, actor, director and root for them. If they win, then they will win. What do they win? They win dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin. The brain does not care why dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin are released. Its only concern is that it happens. In that regard, the brain is like a shrewd, homely brunette with no cleavage. It does what it needs to do to meet its neurochemical demands.

In addition, we all dream of being the winning Super Bowl Quarterback, or Miss Universe, a Nobel Laureate, etc., because of the social significance attached to it, and the subsequent neurochemical rewards available by participating in the fantasy. Striving to win it all is

human nature. Sadly, only a few can win it all. So, human nature devised an alternate strategy—bask in the reflected glory of those that do. The same brain mechanisms involved in delusion overlap the mechanisms involved in BIRGing.

There is no shame in that game. This world is brutal. It under appreciates us all; and the more marginalized a person is the more likely they are to BIRG. The less actual glory you have, the more reflected glory you need. Hence, we have rabid sports fans who will spend their last dime on a NFL logo T-shirt, or papparrazi who stand in the rain for hours to get a glimpse of their favorite movie star. However, people are doing far worse things for neurochemical benefits such as: drugs, alcohol, overeating, and the other various 12-step-program behaviors.

Intellectually, of course, I do not believe in awards for art; so I am opposed to the Oscars in theory. However, when I was a television comedy writer, NBC submitted my first script for an Emmy nomination. (This is not the same as receiving a nomination. It is more like making it past the first cut of a beauty pageant that has a bunch of homely contestants.) Anyway, the day I received that notice I immediately started believing in awards for art—especially this one. The day my agent informed me that I did not receive the nomination I went back to not believing in awards for art. So, I believe in awards for art—as long as they are for me. Enjoy the Oscars, or do not, but no matter what, remain fabulous and phenomenal.

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/obesely-speaking/201403/the-oscars-affect-your-brain

Questions

1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Define BIRG and explain how it affects viewers according to the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following and explain the impact of entertainment media on the individual. State whether the impact is positive or negative and identify the media category in each picture.







2. In a short paragraph, describe how entertainment media can change society's perspective on people with disabilities according to the following video.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uClf0G3CKns

3. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFR1MoHUj3A

MODULE EIGHT: IMPACT OF DISNEY MOVIES

Disney movies have been an all time favorite. Adults, as much as children, enjoy watching Disney films. These movies portray our favorite characters and always end with good conquering over evil. Disney always has moral messages behind its movies that are being transferred through its magical characters such as princes, princesses, and talking animals. Therefore, it definitely has an impact on its viewers.

Summary

This module will be discussing the impact of Disney movies. Disney has made a name for itself through its enchanting stories and characters, and has entertained children and adults alike. However, does Disney always have a positive impact on its viewers?

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand the impact of Disney movies through text analysis
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well-developed argument essay on the impact of Disney movies
5. React to pictures related to Disney and media
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

What's Happened To Disney Films?
Written by John Evans in 1995

Many of today's over-30 adults who grew up on a diet of Disney movies are now responsible, God-honoring parents. They want their children to experience the same magic in films and videos that they once enjoyed.

Does the name "Disney" still mean the same in the '90s that it did in the '60s? Not at all. Disney is now a huge conglomerate with such diverse subsidiaries as Miramax Films, Hollywood Pictures, and Touchstone Pictures. The films they produce range from the violent, degrading *Pulp Fiction,* a Miramax film, to the delightful *Beauty and the Beast,* a Walt Disney Co. film. In between these two extremes are a myriad of movies of varying degrees of decency and offensiveness.

Listed below are descriptions which illustrate the undesirable content included in some Walt Disney Pictures films intended for young children. These comments are based on reviews from the *Preview* Family Movie and TV Guide.

The *Little Mermaid* (1989), G-rated animated film. While Disney's villains in the past have simply been mean and nasty, Ursula, the wicked sea witch, is downright evil. Her bizarre appearance and morbid undersea abode exude images of witchcraft, and some scenes are likely to frighten small children. Also, offensive, sexually suggestive dialogue is uncalled for. In one scene the evil Ursula intimates that the mermaid will have to "let her body do her talking." In romantic song, Ariel sings to Eric, "You know you want to do it." Even more disturbing, however, is the picture on the video box that includes a very obvious phallic symbol.

Aladdin (1992), G-rated animated film. The panther head entrance to the cave and a volcanic eruption are violent, jolting, and intense. The Genie transforms the evil Jofar into a sorcerer who violently manipulates others. Jofar changes into a giant snake to fight Aladdin. Again, the evil characters are more than scary – they attack. Also, the videotape includes some suggestive dialogue whispered in the background during a balcony scene between Aladdin and Jasmine. The words, "Take off your – " can be heard, implying that the muffled word is "clothes."

Lion King (1994), G-rated animated film. New Age and occultic concepts appear to be introduced when it's said that the father lion is living on in the son. Also, a remark is made that dead kings are looking down on the young lion. These can be interpreted literally as the Hindu concept of the universality of the soul. Also, when the young lion talks to his dead father, this violates the biblical admonition against communicating with the spirits of the dead.

Lion King also includes intense violence, including a graphic stampede and clawing and biting among animals. This continues the trend to show hand-to-hand combat that inflicts severe injuries.

Pocahontas (1995), G-rated animated film. This brand new feature film favorably depicts Indian animism – the belief that every natural object, such as rocks and trees, have spirits. Also, it portrays communication with spirits of the dead as acceptable. "The producers give an exaggerated picture of the white colonists as greedy, bloodthirsty monsters who just want to rid the land of 'those savages.'"

The Walt Disney Pictures company continues to produce Disney's G-rated films as well as its more family oriented movies, such as *Iron Will, Angels in the Outfield, White Fang,* and the *Mighty Ducks* series. However, several years ago, the Disney organization decided to produce more "mature" films and established two wholly owned companies to produce them, Hollywood Pictures and Touchstone Pictures. Also, a few years ago, Disney acquired Miramax Films, which distributes some very offensive films, most of them produced in foreign countries.

A few examples of the most offensive films these companies have produced or distributed are given below.

Pulp Fiction (l994 – Miramax Films). Disgusting R-rated adult film which contains over 320 obscenities and profanities, ongoing graphic and gratuitous violence, a homosexual rape, and much bizarre behavior.

Color of Night (1994 – Hollywood Pictures). Gruesome R-rated murder mystery with bloody killings, stabbings, an impaling, and choking. Also, a sexual affair with graphic sexual content and nudity, and over 100 obscenities and profanities.

Priest (1995 – Miramax Films). This controversial R-rated film sympathetically portrays a homosexual priest and depicts other Catholic priests as disreputable characters. Contains scenes of graphic homosexual lovemaking. Catholics nation-wide protested the film.

Who Framed Roger Rabbit? (1988 – Touchstone Pictures). Suggestive, violent PG-rated cartoon film in which some characters are boiled in toxic waste and flattened by a steam roller. Also, features an implied extramarital affair, crude language, sexually suggestive humor, and a voluptuous, seductive female character.

For parents who want to select only wholesome, decent entertainment for their families, the *Preview* Family Movie and TV Guide publishes reviews of all current films twice a month. The reviews contain information on the desirable elements in a film as well as a detailed description of any offensive material.

QUESTIONS

1. Identify the type of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Explain how Disney negatively affects children according to the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following pictures from Disney movies and explain the impact of entertainment media on its viewers. State whether the impact is positive or negative.







1. In a short paragraph, describe the similarities between Barbie and Disney princesses according to the following video.

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-p9lPHDwFbY

2. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the WH questions as possible.

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcjlBYM6FRc

MODULE NINE: TECHNOLOGY AND ‘DOWN TIME’

Technology has become an important aspect of our lives. Some say that it invades our life because it is taking over everything. Job positions are being replaced by technology and people cannot function without it anymore. Our phone is the most important device as it controls our live. Technology has become too invasive to the point that many of its users are not having enough ‘down time’.

Summary

This module will be discussing the lack of down time due to technology. Down time is time off from any form of technology in order to be able to think about anything else such as personal activities and things that we would like to do without being distracted by technology. However, this has become very difficult for many because people are no longer used to having time for themselves without the involvement of technology.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Understand the impact of technology on ‘down time’
2. Learn new vocabulary words
3. Identify the parts of argument in the text
4. Write a well-developed argument essay on the impact of technology
5. React to pictures related to media technology
6. Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Has Technology Killed Down Time?

Why our minds so desperately need a break from all that we focus on.

Published on March 31, 2014 by Nancy Colier, LCSW, Rev. in Inviting a Monkey to Tea

A woman I know is afraid to go to bed at night. She's not afraid of the dark or of having a nightmare. She's not afraid of someone breaking into her apartment or of dying in her sleep. What she's afraid of is open time with herself, the unfocused down time that bedtime brings, time when she is not doing anything specific, not focused on any external something.

Someone else I know described the experience of lying in bed one morning, not having anything particular to get up for, and not being able to "find" anything to really think about. He said he felt like he had nowhere to "put his mind" and as a result, felt like he was going insane. The lack of a focus for his attention sent him into a full-fledged panic attack.

These scenarios may sound strange, but they are more common than you might imagine. With the advent of the digital age, our attention is almost always focused on *something*. We are playing a game, texting, researching, watching, or talking, but always doing *something*, with our mind turned toward and engaged with something outside of ourselves. We treat our own undirected attention like a parent might treat a toddler on a long plane ride, frantically shoving activities and videos in front of his face until he either passes out or the ride comes to an end.

Today we share this same fear of our own unentertained adult mind.

The gap, that space between activities, or what we used to call "down time" is disappearing from our lives. Our attention is now almost always narrowed onto a task or activity and we are losing the spaces in which our attention is open, without a specific focus. People say that we are becoming unfocused as a society but in fact we are becoming *hyper*-focused, always looking *at* something and never just *looking*—without a specific object or goal of our gaze.

Open awareness, down time, the gap—whatever you call it—serves an important purpose in our lives. When I have a problem I can't solve, I will often go for a walk and drop the problem altogether. Later that day, after not thinking about it for some time, the solution generally appears in my mind. I am not unique in having this experience. Something is actually happening in that down time. The mind is putting things together, making associations, doing a different kind of work, that happens outside our awareness. For many people, it is in these gaps that they have their best flashes of insight, as if we need to take our mind *off* of something in order to gain access to our intuition and really, to our everything.

So too, the mind needs recess periods in its day—like a child does—when it can just run and play, jump from thing to thing and not have to direct its energy toward any particular object or event. The mind needs to be able to flow freely from thought to thought, or simply rest in

no thought. Down time between tasks allows our mind to rest. Gaps in our day give us time to just float about, space out or take a much-needed break from mental activity. This float time then allows us to re-boot our system and come back with renewed juice to bring to the next object of our attention. With our attention flipped on and at something all the time, we become mentally exhausted and while more time is spent focusing on tasks, we in fact become, qualitatively, less productive.

Furthermore, unfocused attention in our day allows us to spend time with ourselves, to make ourselves the focus of our attention. While not playing a game or engaging in a Google search, we can contemplate our own experience, check in, and discover how we are doing in the middle of all this noise, this life. Now, because our attention is always focused on something else, we have ceased to be a destination for our own attention.

And yet the media says that we are becoming pathological narcissists. Aren't we focusing more on ourselves than ever? Yes, we are spending far more time reporting on ourselves, focusing on our identity, describing where we've been, what we are doing and so on, but at the same time, we are spending far less time actually *being* with ourselves, *inside* our own attention, asking and answering to our self. As a result of always having an external focus, we have, sadly, come to view being with ourselves, without something else to focus on, as a void, a panic-inducing non-place.

From a spiritual perspective, the spaces between—between tasks, between thoughts, between breaths, between all the objects of our attention—are profoundly important. It's the space we inhabit during meditation. It's in the spaces *between* thoughts that we connect with the awareness within which thought happens. It's in this open awareness that we gain a sense of detachment and freedom from the mind. When we lose the ability or opportunity to live in the gaps, we become slaves to the mind, and subsequently terrified of any moment when the mind is not occupied. Gaps then become a kind of death—when we cannot feel our mind's presence or experience our own presence, as if we cease to exist. On the other hand, a deep and lasting confidence arises when we can tolerate and even enjoy open, undirected space, when being with just our self is not something to be feared.

Breaks from focused attention are beneficial in myriad ways. They bring insight, allow us to solve problems without trying, give our mind a chance to rest, and to play without an agenda. Gaps give us time to spend time with ourselves, to experience our own being, and to know ourselves as more than just what we are doing and thinking. Gaps give us the confidence to stop trying to out-run open space, escape down time, and ultimately, dodge ourselves.

In the digital age, we value action, information, and entertainment, and we are encouraged to keep the mind busy at all times. If we want to create down time, to make space, we have to actively do it. Ironically, creating space in which we can be unfocused now takes focused attention.

On a practical level, you can create down time in very small ways, by taking five minutes every day and consciously resisting the urge to give your mind something to chew on. When your mind tells you it's time to play a game, email a friend, research a vacation, figure out a work problem, or write a to-do list, just say, "No. Not now." The mind will always search for

something to attend to. You however, can practice being present without having an object of that presence, being aware without having to direct your awareness *at* something. Try it in short stretches, and notice what unfolds, and if you feel differently. Or, similarly, take a walk without your phone (or any device) and let your mind just wander, or slip away. Set aside times for an approved space out. Give yourself the gift of the gap, the privilege of the space that used to be built into life but is no longer.

As a result, you may not only feel less brain-weary and mentally fatigued. You may also discover a sense of internal spaciousness, a wider and more panoramic view of life which is not frantic and not dependent on external material to escape an internal void. With enough practice, your own presence may become a place unto itself, and you may discover that it is in the spaces between your objects of attention that you feel most spacious, whole, calm, and ultimately, well.

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/inviting-monkey-tea/201403/has-technology-killed-down-time

QUESTIONS

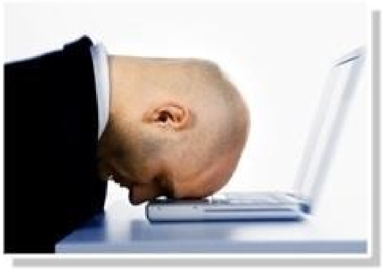
1. Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
2. What is the issue of the text?
3. Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
4. Identify one argument in the text.
5. Identify the types of support being used.
6. Explain how technology has killed down time according to the author.
7. Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs** and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

1. Look at the following pictures and explain the impact of media technology on down time. State whether the impact is positive or negative.











1. In a short paragraph, describe how technology has changed the meaning of family according to the following video.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8gzODe2YrU

2. Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the WH questions as possible.

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7fl6Gqbd4w

MODULE TEN: MEDIA AND REAL BEAUTY

Media is the first source of beauty definition. That beauty can be attainable; but mostly not at all. Beauty in the media is being altered through make up and Photoshop in order to promote perfection. This image of beauty pushes the consumers of media to try and reach perfection. This is very frustrating and can sometimes turn dramatic. Women are going to extremes in order to attain beauty as portrayed by the media, but they do not realize that this beauty is unattainable because it is unrealistic.

Summary

This module will be discussing how beauty is being portrayed by the media and the impact it might have on the consumers. Beauty in the media is being altered and has become unrealistic to the point where nobody ages. Some media sources are fighting to portray real and natural beauty, but it is up to the audience to determine what is attainable and what is beautiful.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

- Understand how media portrays beauty
- Learn new vocabulary words
- Identify the parts of argument in the text
- Write a well developed argument essay on the impact of beauty in the media
- React to pictures related to media and beauty
- Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

The Case for Real Beauty

We're seeing a revolution in how we view beauty. Here's why.
Published on March 20, 2014 by Vivian Diller, Ph.D. in Face It

Real beauty.

It sounds like an oxymoron, but it is now a welcome message for many women. While the shift has been slowly building, we're witnessing a sea change in how beauty is viewed in our culture. One can almost map the evolution—which I believe is about to become a *revolution*—so let's take a look at our progress.

In 2004, Dove began its campaign for Real Beauty with what then seemed like an innovative idea; print ads featuring everyday women instead of models. Their now-iconic photo of six women with real bodies and real curves provoked a global conversation about female stereotypes, body image and the importance of widening our definition of beauty. In 2006, after gaining enormous approval from consumers, the campaign continued with videos related to the topic. The first, "Evolution," showed a model transformed from unadorned face to billboard perfection, using the magic of makeup, lighting and Photoshop. Another, "Real Sketches," compared two artist drawings of the same woman—one based on a self-reported description, the other on a stranger's—revealing women's tendency to be more critical of their appearance than others are. More recently, the organization Global Democracy created a time-lapse video with similar intent, demonstrating how digital alterations create an image that barely resembles its original model. All of these videos have gone viral, with millions of views on YouTube, signaling an eagerness by many to change the culture of beauty.

Others have followed: Last year, The American Medical Association(AMA) denounced the retouching of images in advertising, requesting stricter guidelines for the way photos are manipulated in ad campaigns. AMA physicians believe that portraying models with body types attainable only through editing could contribute to body-image problems for many women. Around the same time, members of the French parliament proposed a policy requiring that all digitally-enhanced photographs include a warning label indicating that the images may be detrimental to one's health. Failure to do so would lead to a serious fine.

The trend continues to spread worldwide. English officials chimed in after London magazines featured an Olay ad depicting 59-year-old Twiggy, Photoshopped without a single wrinkle. Member of Parliament Jo Swinson said, "Airbrushing means that adverts contain completely unattainable perfect images no one can live up to in real life. We need to help protect children from these pressures and we need to make a start by banning airbrushing in adverts aimed at them."

In 2006, the Spanish government demanded a ban on overly thin women from fashion runways. Earlier this year, the media was abuzz when popular London clothing store Debenhams decided to use mannequins that look more like real women. They told reporters they believed that other stores in Europe would likely follow, since these new figures more accurately reflect their market.

It's a sentiment growing stronger and louder among women of all ages. Remember then-14-year-old Julia Bluhm? She inspired the "Keep It Real Challenge," rallying thousands of her peers to sign a petition against the use of Photoshop in teen magazines. Gaining momentum through social media, she staged a protest in front of Hearst Corp. offices, and got Seventeen editor-in-chief Ann Shoket to sit down and talk about the magazine's picture-

doctoring practices. Shoket ultimately agreed to run at least one unaltered photo spread per issue.

Encouraged by Bluhm's success, several other groups—Spark, MissRepresentation.org, Lovesocial.org and I Am That Girl—joined together in a similar venture to reach other magazines. A three-day social-media campaign was launched with a Facebook event and tweets directly asking magazines to pledge to change their Photoshop practices. Participants were then asked to blog about how unrealistic images of beauty have impacted them. On the last day, girls were asked to post photos of "real beauty" on Instagram, with a selection featured on a billboard in New York City. The campaign was a wild success.

Verily, the first new adult fashion magazine launched in recent history, promises to forego all digitally altered images. Founders Kara Eschbach and Janet Sahm want to promote the idea that "the unique features of women, whether crows feet, freckles, or a less-than-rock-hard body, are aspects that contribute to women's beauty and should be celebrated—not shamed, changed or removed." The magazine has garnered enormous media attention and the support of women around the world.

We're seeing this trend elsewhere in the media. The HBO series *Girls* is a hit for lots of reasons; among them is very real-looking star/writer/producer Lena Dunham's willingness to portray herself breaking the stereotype of conventional beauty. Dunham takes great pains to display 20-somethings as far less than perfect. She almost exaggerates her physical flaws on camera to make the point; she is who she is and she represents how most "girls" truly are in the real world.*Orange is the New Black*, the Netflix hit series, stars a wide variety of real-looking women of all ages unadorned, with little makeup and wearing prison garb, but each growing more beautiful as the season goes on.

The hopeful news continues. Recently, California lingerie boutique Curvy Girl launched its "Regular Woman" campaign, in which women were asked to submit unadorned photos of themselves, regardless of their shape and size, to celebrate the beauty of average, non-model females. Some celebrities have done the same, posting their unaltered images online, just to make the point; they may be considered beautiful by many, but they're not perfect by any means.

Kate Winslet, 38; Rachel Weisz, 44; and Emma Thompson, 54, have all been quite outspoken about cookie-cutter beauty and its impact on aging stars. Winslet told The Telegraph, "People who look too perfect don't look sexy or particularly beautiful." Thompson has said, "We're in this awful youth-driven thing now where everybody needs to look 30 at 60." Surely these women can afford to take such a stand—being so young (it's all relative) and beautiful (yes, also relative)—but their attitude has been well received.

As I see it, the yearning for perfect beauty is beginning to lose strength among everyday women and celebs alike. Boomers may have been the first to feel what I call "image fatigue" as their attempts to appear like younger versions of themselves led to too-many inauthentic faces and bodies. This plastic, overly puffed-up image has become a turn-off to many, in part because such faces have all begun to look the same. The next generation is feeling it too: Millennials are experimenting with more fashion and makeup statements that express authenticity. For many young women, less is becoming more.

It seems as if women's voices are joining together and being heard: *We want to feel and look attractive, but there isn't just one way to do that. We want to look like ourselves, not someone else.*

Finally, real may be the new beautiful.

Vivian Diller, Ph.D. is a psychologist in private practice in New York City. She serves as a media expert on various psychological topics and as a consultant to companies promoting health, beauty and cosmetic products. Her book, "Face It: What Women Really Feel As Their Looks Change" (2010), edited by Michele Willens, is a psychological guide to help women deal with the emotions brought on by their changing appearances.

Text Retrieved from:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/face-it/201403/the-case-real-beauty

Questions

- Identify the types of media discussed in the text.
- What is the issue of the text?
- Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
- Identify one argument in the text.
- Identify the types of support being used.
- Explain how some media sources are trying to change the definition of real beauty according to the author.
- Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

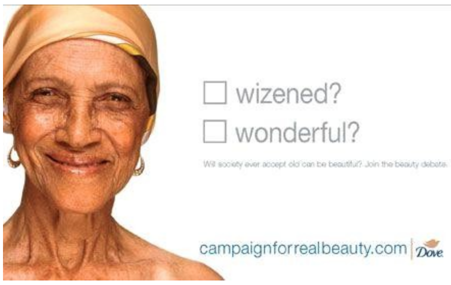
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ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

- Look at the following advertisements, and explain how media portrays beauty. State whether the portrayal of beauty is real or artificial.











- In a short paragraph, describe the possible impact of the media beauty industry on young girls according to the following video.

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ei6JvK0W60I

- Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HMIHmAOKSE

MODULE ELEVEN: ROMANCE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has not only become a way to stay connected with friends and loved ones, but it has become the platform of many romantic relationships. Many people meet and fall in love via social media networks such as Facebook. It is very practical for people who are not very sociable and shy to meet and express themselves towards a potential love interest. It is even an effective way for people who spend too much time with work and don't have time to go out and socialize in order to meet new people. However, others have found social media networks such as Facebook as a way of keeping up and being updated about past ex lovers.

Summary

This module will be discussing how social media networks, especially Facebook are being used in order to scrutinize or stalk past loves. This is an unhealthy habit that soon turns into an addiction that one cannot control. Instead of helping an individual get over a break up, stalking an ex leads to further feelings of sadness and loneliness, and will slow down the recovery process.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

- Understand the impact of social media on relationships
- Learn new vocabulary words
- Identify the parts of argument in the text
- Write a well developed argument essay on the impact of social media on romance
- React to pictures related to media and romance
- Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Romance and the Dangers of Social Media

Stop stalking your ex on Facebook and you'll bounce back faster.

Published on February 26, 2014 by Jesse Fox, Ph.D. in Better Living With Technology

Yet another reason you shouldn't Facebook stalk your ex:

Breakups are supposed to be the *end* of a relationship. Whether the end came via a fight or a fizzle, after a relationship used to end, it required some significant effort to contact an ex or figure out what was going on in his or her life. Now, social networking sites like Facebook can keep you digitally connected to exes, whether or not it's good for you.

Social media and breakups

A growing body of research demonstrates that although we could delete that connection and "defriend" an ex, we often choose to stay virtually linked. We don't necessarily maintain that connection due to feelings of closeness or friendship, though; users typically admit staying linked so they can "Facebook stalk" to see how an ex's life progresses after the breakup:

Is s/he posting about the breakup?
Is s/he brooding over the relationship?
Is that song lyric or sassy quote directed at me?
Has anyone started to flirt or show romantic interest?
Is s/he dating someone new?

Before social networking sites, we'd often have to rely on updates from common friends if we wanted to get information about our exes without directly contacting them. Now, our friend Facebook is ready and willing to share this information with a few quick clicks. And Facebook will never chastise you for asking.

Although social networking sites enable you to access to such information, if you're distressed about a breakup, it's in your best interest not to. Ruminating too much about a terminated relationship tends to augment feelings of sadness and regret and stifle the healing process. Similarly, looking at artifacts of the relationship or "creeping" on your ex's profile on Facebook can keep you stuck in a post-breakup funk. Research by Dr. Tara Marshall has shown that, regardless of any offline contact, following your ex's activity on Facebook will prolong your distress, increase negative feelings, promote more longing, and postpone emotional recovery.

The role of attachment

As noted in my earlier post (you can read and take a quiz on your attachment style here), people with anxious attachment styles are more likely to engage in Facebook stalking. Thus, those with preoccupied and fearful attachment styles may be at higher risk of post-breakup distress and hindered recovery due to intensive monitoring an ex on Facebook.

The end of relationships are especially hard on those with anxious attachment styles. As Dr. Katie Warber notes, "Such individuals tend to become preoccupied with checking their ex's Facebook page. They find themselves looking at pictures and status updates—even asking friends to monitor their former partner's page—which can ultimately compound feelings of loneliness and loss."

Your best bet, then, is not to monitor your ex on Facebook at all, especially if you have an anxious attachment style. Willpower can be lacking when you're emotionally drained from a

breakup, so even if you're typically a limited Facebook user, you may need to figure out ways to keep yourself away from your ex's page. Here are some options:

Get rid of the digital artifacts. If there are reminders of the relationship all over your own profile—comments s/he made on your page, pictures or posts you're tagged in together, photo albums you created or shared—it's more likely that you'll be thinking about your ex-partner. As Warber notes, "In this day and age, digital social media makes erasing those memories much more difficult, keeping them at the forefront of the mind and making it more difficult to move forward."

Blocking and hiding. Facebook allows you to block any user or hide their posts, meaning their updates won't show up in your newsfeed. So if/when your ex starts friending a lot of attractive singles mere days after your breakup, your feed won't look like the next cast of "The Bachelor." (It is important to note, though, that blocking or hiding means you still remain "friends," so it doesn't keep you from ever visiting his or her page.)

Defriending. Defriending can keep you off of the ex's page altogether, yet defriending an ex can also send an unintended nonverbal message. Your intention may have been to keep a healthy distance, but the action, when noticed by the ex, might read as "I never want to talk to you again." If you're still on good terms with an ex, give a polite heads-up before you fully sever your Facebook connection.

Ask a friend. The digital era may leave you without photo or ticket stubs to burn, but friends can still be useful in helping you make Facebook a reminder-free zone by deleting posts or photo albums you don't want to see.

Stay off of social media entirely. If you can't trust yourself to use it properly, taking a social media sabbatical is a good idea. Block sites from your web browser or remove apps from your phone to make them difficult to access. In perhaps the most creative solution I've heard, a young woman had her sister log into her account and change the password, telling her sibling not to reveal it until she felt the young woman was sufficiently over the breakup to handle it again.

In the end, it's up to you to take control of your life after a breakup, and in the digital age, part of that means dealing with social media. Keep your use positive and productive to promote healthy healing and recovery.

Text Retrieved From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/better-living-technology/201402/romance-and-the-dangers-social-media

Questions

- Identify the type of media discussed in the text.
- What is the issue of the text?
- Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
- Identify one argument in the text.
- Identify the types of support being used.
- Explain healthy ways to stay away from an ex's Facebook page according to the author.
- Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

- Look at the following images, and explain the impact of media on romance. State whether the impact is positive or negative.







- In a short paragraph, describe whether social media is ruining romance according to the following video.

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-jv2F2SoEg

- Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F85VN0AwNi4

MODULE TWELVE: ADOLESCENCE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As discussed in previous modules, social media has become the gateway to world where people can constantly stay connected. Teens enjoy this form of communication because it is a way of preserving their privacy by socializing without being watched by an adult. Parents on the other hand complain that social media is causing social isolation and disconnecting their children from the real world. Adults also complained that social media does more harm than good; however, is that always the case?

Summary

This module will be discussing the impact of social media on teenagers. Nowadays, teens spend more and more time on social media because it has become a socialization tool. Parents would rather have their children socialize in real life while teens complain that they cannot because they are being constantly supervised.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

- Understand the relationship between social media and teenagers
- Learn new vocabulary words
- Identify the parts of argument in the text
- Write a well developed argument essay on the connection between teens and technology
- React to pictures related to media and romance
- Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

Five Myths About Young People and Social Media

A new book exposes widely-held beliefs about new technology.

Published on February 13, 2014 by Peter Gray in Freedom to Learn

Teenagers have always been attracted to public spaces where they can hang out with friends, find new friends, and talk endlessly with peers about matters that concern them, away from parents and other authority figures. Such gatherings are crucial to human development; they are how teenagers expand their social horizons, share views on issues that matter to them, experiment with different versions of their personality, and develop the sense of independence from parents and other adults that they must in order to become adults themselves.

Until rather recently, the places where teens would find one another were physical, geographical spaces, but today they are more often located in cyberspace. Many adults are puzzled, and some are appalled, by the amount of time teens spend online and by what they seem to do there. A terrific new book by Danah Boyd (who spells her name without capitals), entitled *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*, helps us make sense of it.

[…]

As the title of her book (*It's Complicated*) suggests, the results of Boyd's study can't be summarized with a few simple statements. The book debunks some of the simplistic myths about teens and technology that we often find in the popular media or hear in conversations among adults. Here are five of those myths, and some of what Boyd has to tell us that is relevant to each:

Myth #1: Technology creates social isolation.

A teenager at a computer or smartphone may look socially isolated, but, more often than not, the teen is using that device to overcome social isolation—isolation that we adults have imposed. Boyd says that she often heard parents complain that their teens preferred computers to "real people," but the teens' perspective was quite different. Teens, throughout the country, and across ethnic groups, told her repeatedly that they would much rather get together with friends in person, but had little opportunity to do so. They communicated with their friends through social media, because that was often the only way they could reach them.

In generations past, teenagers, and even preteens and younger children, socialized with one another as they walked to school and back every day. At school they could socialize during lunch hour and other breaks in the day. After school and on weekends, they could walk, bicycle, take public transit, or (in the case of older teens) drive to find one another at parks, fields, street corners, vacant lots, secret clubhouses, diners, malls, or other regular meeting places. Today's teens don't have such freedom. Many aren't allowed to walk to school. "Lunch hour" is no longer even close to an hour, and other breaks in the school day have been largely removed. Many parents restrict their teens from venturing out without an adult, and even when parents do allow it, other forces work against it. As Boyd points out, policy makers have implemented curfews and anti-loitering laws aimed at teens, in the mistaken belief that this curbs juvenile crime (she cites evidence that it does not); and many

commercial venues that once welcomed or at least tolerated teens now ban them, especially when they appear in groups. Even when an individual teen is free to leave the house and has a place to go, the chance that his or her friends will also have that freedom is small.

Boyd found that the parents she talked with often believed they were providing their teens with opportunities to socialize when they enrolled them in and drove them to adult-directed after-school activities, but the teens disagreed. They told boyd that these activities provided little opportunity for the kind of socializing they craved, precisely because of the adult structure and continuous adult surveillance.

[…]

Myth #2: Teens are addicted to technology and social media.

In a previous essay on this blog (on video game "addiction"), I described our tendency to apply the term *addiction* to almost any kind of activity that people enjoy and engage in frequently. Used more conservatively and usefully, the term refers to an activity that (a) is compulsive in the sense that the person hasn't been able to stop doing it, even with great effort, and (b) is clearly more harmful than helpful to the person engaged in that behavior.

[…]

Boyd (p 92) points out that if we use the term *addiction* to refer to any activity that people enjoy and to which they devote great amounts of time, then "*Being 'addicted' to information and to people is part of the human condition: it arises from a healthy desire to be aware of surroundings and to connect to society."* It's not the technology itself that draws young people in; it's the chance to communicate with peers and learn about their world. The computer is just a tool, like the telephone used to be.

When adults see that children and teens are using computers and smart phones rather than playing outdoors or socializing in physical space, they find it easier to blame the computer and its supposed "addictive" qualities than to blame themselves and the social conditions that have deprived young people of the freedom to congregate in physical places, away from interfering adults.

Myth #3: Teens these days have no appreciation of privacy.

Adults are often appalled by the tendency of teens to put information into the Internet that "should be private." In contrast, teens regularly told Boyd that they used social media in order to achieve privacy. The difference seems to be one of concern about privacy from whom. Parents worry about the prying eyes of strangers, whereas teens are more concerned about the prying eyes and ears of adults who know them well [...]

Sometimes teens who are physically near one another will text or use social media rather than talk, precisely so parents or others who are physically present won't know what they're saying. Teens quite rightly get annoyed when their parents go online and read what was intended for peers, not parents. It's little different, to them, from reading private mail, or bugging their bedroom, or reading their diary. Boyd (p 59) writes, further, "*In 2012, when I asked teens who were early adopters of Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram why they prefer these services to Facebook, I heard a near-uniform response: 'Because my parents don't know about it."*

It is true, however, that many teens ignore or are unaware of the long-lasting traces they may leave when they communicate through social media and the harmful effects that can occur, for example, if read by a potential future employer. Boyd found that despite the common perception that all teens are Internet savvy, many of them are not. They often don't know how to use the privacy settings on social media and are often unaware or forgetful of the

extent to which audiences other then the intended ones could access what they are saying. Boyd suggests that we, as individual adults and as a society, could do more than we currently do to help teens understand better the social media they are using. Instead of warning them not to use it, or forbidding them from using it, we might help them find ways to use it more intelligently.

Myth #4: Social media put teens at great risk from sexual predators.

In a nationwide survey, Boyd and her colleagues found that 93 percent of parents were concerned that their child might meet a stranger online who would hurt them, while only one percent of them indicated that any of their own children had ever had such an experience. By far the biggest fear expressed by parents was of "sexual predators," "child molesters," "pedophiles," and "sex offenders" who might contact their child through their online participation. This mirrors the fears, revealed in other national and international surveys, that underlie many parents' decisions to restrict their children from venturing away from home, outdoors, without adult protection. Surprisingly, the respondents to Boyd's survey expressed as much fear for their sons as for their daughters.

As I and others (e.g. Lenore Skenazy in her book *Free Range Kids*) have reported elsewhere, the "stranger danger" fears that afflict so many parents are greatly overblown. In fact, harm of any kind to children or teens from adult strangers is very rare, and there is little or no evidence that technology or social media has increased such danger. As boyd (p 110) puts it: "*Internet-initiated sexual assaults are rare—and the overall number of sex crimes against minors has been steadily declining since 1992—which suggests that the internet has not created a new plague.*" Of course, teens and children should all be cautioned about such possibilities, and we should discuss common-sense ways of preventing it with them, but the danger is so small that it is irrational to ban our children from social media because of it.

The fact is, child molestation is far more likely to be perpetrated by people who are well known to the child, such as relatives, trusted family friends, priests, and teachers, than by strangers […]

Myth #5: Bullying through social media is a huge national problem.

Bullying, real bullying, is, of course, a serious problem wherever it occurs; and, indeed, there are some well-documented cases of cyber bullying (online bullying) that have ended in tragedy. But how often do such cases occur? Is such bullying common enough and serious enough that we should ban teens from social media?

As is the case for *addiction*, part of the problem with the term *bullying* lies in how people define or identify it. Boyd notes that she met parents who saw every act of teasing as bullying, even when their children, including those who were targets, did not. I have met such parents, too, and some are unshakeable in their convictions. Overextension also occurs when the term *bullying* is applied to serious, two-way disputes between people of equal power. Boyd found that teens themselves generally had a more conservative—and more meaningful—way of identifying bullying: Bullying exists when there is an imbalance of power between two individuals or groups and the more powerful one repeatedly attacks the less powerful one in ways that hurt the latter.

[…]

Concluding thoughts

I like the main title of Boyd's book, *It's Complicated*. I can well imagine these words prefacing many of the responses that teens gave to the questions she asked in interviews. An overriding message of the book is that the assumptions about teens and technology expressed

by the media, politicians, parents, educators, and even by child psychiatrists and other such "experts" are often overly simplistic if not dead wrong. Whenever we see behavior among teens that seems strange to us, or hear of case examples of real atrocities, we tend to rush to judgment, and altogether too often the direction in which we rush is to add yet another restriction to the already highly restricted lives of today's young people.

[…]

Trust promotes trustworthiness, and lack of trust can promote the opposite. Teens are neither angels nor devils—they never were and never will be—any more than you and I are. Teens are not completely mature; they make mistakes. They may even be less mature and more prone to mistakes than you and I are. But they must be allowed to make mistakes, for that is how they grow up. They can't learn to take control of their own lives if we don't allow them to take that control. They can't learn to trust themselves if we don't allow them to practice such trust. Boyd's research and book are great achievements, because she took teens seriously and listened to them.

Text Retreived From :

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/freedom-learn/201402/five-myths-about-young-people-and-social-media

Questions

- Identify the type of media discussed in the text.
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- Identify one argument in the text.
- Identify the types of support being used.
- Explain healthy ways to stay away from an ex's Facebook page according to the author.
- Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*.

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

- Look at the following images, and explain the impact of social media on teens. State whether the impact is positive or negative.














- In a short paragraph, describe the positive impact of social networks according to the following video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-T7bqK2fGY

- Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fpUM0jknVs

MODULE THIRTEEN: DISNEY'S FROZEN AND STEROTYPES

As discussed in module eight, Disney stereotypes has a great impact on the audience that may not be very positive, especially on the young girls. However, Disney's latest animation *Frozen*, tries to break these stereotypical boundaries. It depicts messages that love at first does not exist and that prince charming may not always be so charming. True love is not only between a man and a woman but between two sisters. Those messages might be a nice change from the stereotypical Disney movies we have become used to; but, parents and adults are still not relieved.

Summary

This module will be discussing the impact of Disney's *Frozen* on its audience. Even though Disney's latest production is a nice change, experts think that the negative stereotypes are still there and is still ongoing.

Module Objectives

In this module, you will learn to:

- Understand the impact of Disney stereotypes on its audience
- Learn new vocabulary words
- Identify the parts of argument in the text
- Write a well developed argument essay on Disney's positive and negative stereotypes
- React to pictures related to Disney stereotypes
- Write a short media report

READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following article, and answer the corresponding questions.

If Only "That Perfect Girl" Were "Gone"

The more things change, the more they stay frozen in time.

Published on May 21, 2014 by Dara Greenwood, PhD in Mirror, Mirror

Just when it seems that everything interesting and relevant that can be said about Disney's *Frozen* has been said (most recently in Sunday's NY Times), I have a few social psychological cents to throw in the mix.

[Disclaimer: I do not have children. I have seen my friends' adorable videos of their kids singing their hearts out to every lyric. I myself have hummed "Let it go" for days on end. It IS catchy and vaguely satisfying. However…]

While some of the messages in the movie have been appropriately touted as refreshing twists on old standards: a diabolical handsome prince, the triumph of sisterly love above romantic love, a lesson in using icy, architectural power in non-lethal doses, ultimately the appearance prescriptions have remained relatively frozen (sorry, last one) in time. Take a 1950s Cinderella, add a dash of Angelina and/or a Bratz doll for sexualized allure, and bibbity-bobbity-boo: Elsa's transformation is complete.

Instead of seizing her powers by the broom-handle and ferociously "Defying Gravity," as Idina Menzel did in *Wicked*'s similar-themed showstopper, Elsa's empowering moment appears skin deep at best. Indeed, it takes her until the bitter (cold) end to appreciate that love conquers all. Cursed with the seemingly uncontrollable ability to turn everything she touches into ice and chased from her own inherited Queendom on her coronation day, Elsa defiantly renounces social life("the cold never bothered me anyway"). Her new physical appearance thus seems to be some kind of essential or natural outgrowth of her inner state, out of the realm (literally) of social norms. The fact that it happens to coincide perfectly with an incredibly narrow definition of traditional female beauty is just…coincidence.

Okay, the skeptic will say, so she looks like a Cinderella/Angelina/Bratz Doll, so what? Let it go (sorry), she is still a role model in other ways, as is her equally adorable, tenacious, and literally self-sacrificing sister. Perhaps young children can embrace the power and leave the traditional, sexy packaging behind, as Dana Stevens, who noticed "The Sexy Frozen Moment No One is Talking About" back in February, hopes for her own daughter:

"I love thrilling to Elsa's race up the ice bridge with my daughter, in large part because I love to imagine her feeling that way one day herself: in control of her own ever-growing powers, able to create vast structures she never imagined, at "one with the wind and sky." But every time that last verse rolls around—the shimmy into the ice dress, the sassy flip of the braid over the shoulder—*I hope that when she grows up she remembers the magic, not the makeover"* (emphasis mine).

I hope so too, but there are a few reasons to believe that, at best, both the magic and the makeover will be remembered.

Research suggests that it may be hard for children, and indeed, adults, to disentangle physical appearance from other positive qualities, particularly if they are female. Take, for example, Cynthia Hoffner's (1996) survey of young children about their favorite TV characters. Whereas young boys' desire to be like and be friends with a favorite male character was predicted by the character's perceived intelligence, strength, and attractiveness, young girls' desire to be like and be friends with a favorite female character was predicted by

attractiveness alone. The picture is only somewhat more comforting in the adult sample Hoffner and her colleague surveyed a decade later; young women's desire to be like a favorite female character is predicted by how smart, successful, admired, AND attractive they perceive her to be. Young men's "wishful identification" is, in turn, predicted by how smart, successful, and violent they perceive favorite male characters to be (Yeah).

Further, Anne Becker's groundbreaking work on Fijian women and body image tells a complex tale of how appearance ideals may become conflated with other kinds of ideals. When someone is a role model, achieving their look may be part and parcel of achieving their role. Rates of disordered eating and body concerns substantially increased just three years after the introduction of Western television programs such as *Melrose Place* (a soap opera from the 1990s featuring folk like Heather Locklear as ruthless but independent and successful business women). The study could not isolate television as the only variable of relevance but anecdotal data suggested that young Fijian women viewed the American characters as role models for how to become more economically and socially independent, and their appearance became an inextricable part of that image (e.g., "they are the same ages but *they are working*, *they are slim* and they are very tall and they are cute, nice; so from there we want ourselves or *we want our bodies to become like that*" emphasis mine).

Finally, work by myself and others has shown that young women who aspire to be like and look like a favorite TV character also experience heightened eating disorder symptoms and body image concerns (e.g., "I think about the way I look many times during the day"). Once a young girl's mind is focused on her appearance (and how others perceive her), fewer resources that might be allocated for joy, friendship, homework, sports, and "flow"—experiences of being optimally absorbed in an activity—are available. I was disheartened but not surprised to read that a mother featured in the *Times* article laments the dark side of the *Frozen* obsession: her daughter has the "'constant neurotic habit' of sweeping her hair to one side in an effort to look like Elsa."

The problem is not that girls and women might want to feel alluring and attractive (this is human!), but that girls' and women's agency is so constantly confounded with beauty ideals that an idealized appearance becomes a minimum requirement for feeling whole and valued. Further, the images offered up by the mass media depict a particularly narrow definition of both sexual allure and empowerment (sorry Miley, Beyonce). Finally, this kind of "power" is not without its own complications and contradictions (i.e., focusing on a woman's appearance can eclipse focusing on and hence appreciating her competence; Rudman and Borgida, 1995; Heflick et al., 2011).

So what to do? How about this: I challenge all feminist-minded animators and story-tellers to help shake the traditional mold up. Help dismantle the (white, slim, blonde, doe-eyed) beauty myth of Disney heroines assembled over half a century ago. Kick start it if you have to. We can, and should, do better for our children and ourselves.

Text Retreived From:

http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/mirror-mirror/201405/if-only-perfect-girl-were-gone

Questions

- Identify the type of media discussed in the text.
- What is the issue of the text?
- Is the claim implicitly or explicitly stated? Identify it.
- Identify one argument in the text.
- Identify the types of support being used.
- Explain how the messages in Disney's *Frozen* may not be so different than the older animations, according to the author.
- Define the highlighted vocabulary words (in yellow) according to the context of the text, and discuss the results with your peers.

ARGUMENT ESSAY WRITING

Write an argument essay using the previous article for your supporting evidence. In the essay, identify two arguments and one counter argument. Make sure to include a refutation (you can use your own support for this part) in your counter argument. Your essay should be composed of an **outline**, an **introduction**, **three body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**. Make sure to follow the argument essay format explained in *Module One*

PICTURE AND VIDEO ANALYSIS

- Look at the following images, and explain whether they conform to Disney's stereotypes. State whether the impact is positive or negative.









- In a short paragraph, describe the impact of *Frozen* on the adult viewer according to the following video. Identify some of the stereotypes that she described.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Qfphm_YQUA

- Watch the following video, and write a short media report answering as many of the Ws questions as possible.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbQm5doF_Uc